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CITY OF BRANSON

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NEWS RELEASE

November 22, 2011

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Action taken by Branson Board of Aldermen at November 22, 2011 meeting

CONSENT AGENDA - SECOND READING AND FINAL PASSAGE BILLS

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS (1st Readings and public hearing)

Agreement with Tri-States Utility Water System to also collect sewer bills from Branson customers

Board approved continuing an agreement with Tri-States Utilities to provide sewer billing services for the city of Branson. City sewer customers who are not connected to the city's water system but connected to Tri-States, and who don't pay their sewer bills, are now subject to termination of water service. Tri-States is charging the city \$4,400 monthly for this service. The agreement has resulted in city revenue increasing \$88,000 over one year from sewer customers on Tri-States water.

Board approves final year contract with Kansas City auditors

In 2007, Aldermen approved a five year contract for auditing services to Cochran Head Vick & Co of Kansas City. The agreement was for one year with an option for an additional four years. The Board has approved year five, which is the final year. Cost to the city in 2012 will be \$38,266 to audit the city plus \$135 an hour with a maximum of \$5,400 - \$6,750 for the convention center audit.

Employee health and wellness incentive approved

Aldermen approved a health and wellness incentive program for employees that will require smokers and those who don't participate in a wellness program in 2012 to pay 15% of their health insurance starting in 2013. Currently, the city pays 100% of all city employees' health insurance premiums. Employees will also be able to opt out of the city's health plan if they show proof of other coverage, and they'll receive \$100 monthly for opting out.

Money for Christmas lights approved

Aldermen approved taking \$23,000 from the Tourism Tax Contingency Fund to pay for the installation, maintenance and removal of the Christmas star lighting displays along Highway 76 for 2011. This at the request of the Branson Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and CVB.

2012 Budget gets first approval

The city's 2012 budget totaling \$67 million has been balanced with a 28.5% reserve fund and has included some major capital improvements. They include \$986,000 to rehabilitate the Veterans Boulevard Bridge, \$500,000 for pedestrian improvements and trails, \$739,000 for water meter replacement and \$200,000 for traffic signal improvements. Adding the capital improvements into the 2012 budget will decrease the reserve fund from 30% to 28.5%.

Stillwood subdivision annexed

Aldermen approved the annexation of 15 properties in the Stillwood Subdivision, which is located along the north side of Bird Road and south of the Stone Valley subdivision in Branson Hills. These properties are currently located in the county, but are part of a larger island within the city's limits that have not had the opportunity to annex because they were never contiguous until now.

Board agrees to another payment for Branson Airport contingent on signed agreement

Aldermen approved on first reading another payment to the Branson Airport, this time from the city's tourism tax reserve fund. The airport submitted a bill almost \$196,000 covering the period January 1 to June 30 of this year. Under a 2006 contract, the city would pay \$8.24 for each visitor brought to Branson. The city can use tourism tax funds because they will partially reimburse the airport for a \$250,000 TV campaign in Chicago when the airport began regular flights to the city. The \$196,000 will be paid to the airport's Transportation Development District (TDD) to pay the airport's bond debts, also per the contract.

However, an agreement between the Branson Airport and TDD has not been signed for this payment to be transferred from the airport to the TDD, and Aldermen amended the bill to require a completed agreement before the second reading and final passage on December 13, or the bill will be postponed to January.

Contract approved to begin inspection of the Veterans Boulevard Bridge

Board approved an agreement with Horner and Shifrin Engineers in Springfield for an analysis and design contract for the Veterans Bridge over Roark Creek downtown. Earlier this year, MoDOT studied the bridge and determined it had some deterioration issues that needed to be addressed. The engineers will conduct a detailed analysis and design repairs to the bridge. Cost of this contract to the city is \$93,930. When this phase is complete, Aldermen will be presented options for the solution, and a final design contract will be needed. City Engineer David Miller said the solutions may range from \$986,000 to \$5 million in cost. Horner and Shifrin were the designers of the Taneycomo Bridge rehabilitation and are familiar with this type of work.

Board approves project to mitigate future flooding

Aldermen approved an agreement with Olsson Associates of Springfield to do the engineering design of the Rainbow Shoals drainage problem. Rainbow Shoals subdivision is on the south side of Fall Creek Road. City officials have identified flooding issues that impact homes as most critical, and a major problem occurs during heavy rains in the northern section of Rainbow Shoals. Cost to the city for the engineering design is \$27,500.

(Audio of the entire Board of Aldermen meeting can be accessed by going to www.bransonmo.gov and clicking on the "Agenda & Minutes" link in the upper left hand corner of the website.)